

MESSAGE.

To the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina:

GENTLEMEN:

The most striking characteristic of our republican system of government, is the periodical assemblage of the representatives of the people, clothed with the power, and charged with the interests of their constituents. Experience has shown that the best security for the preservation of our rights is to be found in a deliberative body, selected by the people from among themselves, and returning at short intervals to the bosom of the community to participate in the blessings derived from wise, or the evils flowing from indiscreet legislation. It is apparent that no form of government can be devised, which will afford a guarantee that the common welfare will be promoted, and the public liberty preserved in the hands of incompetent or faithless agents, and that in proportion to the importance of the trust assumed, should be the zeal, fidelity and diligence, with which we enter upon the discharge of our duties.

I trust that I entertain a proper sense of the high responsibility which rests upon the executive department, and cherish the disposition to co-operate with you in a hearty endeavour to accomplish every object which may be necessary to secure the ends for which our Government was established. It is to be recollected, however, that the Constitution for wise purposes, has confided to you the whole power of legislation. The Executive can neither control nor check your proceedings, and even the privilege of advising you upon the subject of your deliberations, seems to be derived rather from custom, sanctioned by its apparent propriety, than from any express constitutional provision. I approach the discussion, nevertheless, of the important subjects which demand your attention with a frankness, inspired by the conviction, that the high privilege with which you are invested, will but render you the more anxious for its proper exercise and the more disposed to listen with attention to suggestions emanating from a co-ordinate branch of the Government.

A recurrence to our past legislation will shew us, that although our predecessors have transmitted to us unimpaired the great charter of our rights, and were anxiously disposed to advance the improvement of the State, by providing facilities for trade, increasing our agricultural productions, diffusing the advantages of education, and adapting our laws to the improved condition of society, little has been done for the furtherance of either of these wise purposes, in comparison with what it is in our power to effect, and with that which the excited hopes and expectations of the community demand.

It is certainly not claiming too much for North Carolina, when we assert that no State in the union, has from the earliest period of her history, exhibited a more ardent devotion to liberty, or ready obedience to the laws. I regret that the conviction is forced upon me, that her early love of freedom, and immense sacrifices for its attainment and preservation, have not met with the comparative consideration and reward to which they were so justly entitled. This result has been owing in some degree to natural causes, but quite as much to the greater pertinacity, with